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THE EVOLUTION OF THE CITY OF ROME FROM ITS
ORIGIN TO THE GALLIC CATASTROPHE.

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In a normally constituted man time and space are in permanent coördination. In the world of historical science such a permanent coördination is sought after, but not yet everywhere obtained. The student of history and the student of topography are too apt to work in ignorance of each other. The history of Rome has usually been written with small regard for that material and physical thing, the city of Rome; while the writer on topography is far too apt to see the buildings and the piazzas of ancient Rome as an empty stage, a place for action, but for an action in which he is not professionally interested.

Yet the transition through which so many of the natural sciences have recently gone, the change from being merely descriptive to being biogenetic, ought to serve as a lesson to the topographer. It is not possible to study even the site of ancient Rome without taking into account the vicissitudes of history in which this site has been involved.

I would accordingly ask your attention today to an attempt to sketch in its outlines the development of the city of Rome from its earliest beginnings through the Gallic catastrophe. Such a bio-

graphical sketch (for under this treatment the city itself becomes endowed with life and the product is veritably a biography) covers a distinct field in that long series of periods which follow one another in the story of the Eternal City.

Yet this period of the origins has been strangely neglected by modern scholars, at least in so far as attempts at the coördination of material are concerned. The student of ethnography has formed his own opinions regarding the early settlement of this part of Italy, the student of language has drawn his own deductions; the student of religion has discovered certain perfectly definite things regarding the civilization of these primitive peoples; and the student of topography has made his own discoveries, but has also held his own counsel. Yet the language of communication between these special students has been in the main the old traditional one of Rome's founding.

The greatest difficulty which confronts the student of the origins of Rome is not the absence of statements regarding it, but rather the superabundant presence of such statements. If what was afterwards the great city of Rome had been entirely unknown in its birth, we would have placed it in the category of many other famous individuals, and thought nothing of it. But the presence of such a plenitude of sources has at least two bad results; first it leads to endless and hopeless attempts to reconcile conflicting statements¹; and second even after our reason has convinced us that these statements are without authority and represent merely the late products of artificial legend making, we have great difficulty in casting them to one side, and we unconsciously and instinctively recur to them, so much are they a portion of our intellectual heritage. We may prove that Romulus was not known in Rome until after the Gallic catastrophe,² and that we have no reason to suppose the Palatine settlement to be any older than the Capitoline or the

¹ Compare the attempts periodically made to reconstruct the early history of Rome on the basis of the legendary accounts.

² See Carter: "The Death of Romulus," *American Journal of Archaeology*, 1909, pp. 19-29; and (more fully) my forthcoming article, s. v. "Romulus," in Roscher's "Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie."

Quirinal,³ but out of the ruins of our tradition Romulus, Remus and the wolf arise. Thus it is that we are still presenting the subject according to the scheme and phraseology of Varro, though there is scarcely any other part of Varro's learning which we accept unhesitatingly.

In the first place our study of Roman religion and its coördination with the study of the primitive religions of today have shown us that, down to the dawn of history, the inhabitants of the region of Rome were a semi-barbarous people. Their religion was still involved in animism. They felt themselves surrounded by a countless host of potentialities, whose names they knew, but of whose nature they were otherwise ignorant, except in so far as that nature externalized itself in definite acts.⁴ Their religious organization shows that this primitive people was divided, as its most original division, into curiæ or brotherhoods, and that every member of the community must of necessity belong to one of these curiæ.⁵ Their religion shows us further that their interests were agricultural.⁶

Further we know that they lived in little communities on the hilltops surrounded by a circular wall or stockade. Such a primitive settlement was certainly not a city—an urbs. At best it might be dignified by being called a town, an oppidum.⁷

The geological character of the campagna, the presence of vast

³ See below, and also "Roma Quadrata and Septimontium," *American Journal of Archaeology*, 1908, p. 181.

⁴ See Wissowa: "Religion und Kultus der Roemer," p. 20, "Sämmtliche Gottheiten sind sozusagen rein praktisch gedacht als wirksam in all denjenigen Dingen, mit denen der Roemer im Gange des gewöhnlichen Lebens zu thun hat"; and Carter, "Religion of Numa," p. 5 ff.

⁵ If we accept the theory that matriarchy existed in Rome before the institution of the patriarchal system, we are virtually driven to consider the Curie as preceding the family. For an excellent discussion of the Curie, cp. Eduard Meyer, "Geschichte des Altertums," Vol. II., p. 511 ff.

⁶ Cp. the table of gods for this early period, as reconstructed by Mommsen, "Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum," Vol. I., Part 1, ed 2, p. 288, or by Wissowa, "Religion und Kultus," p. 18 and cp. p. 20: "es spiegeln sich in ihr (der alten Götterordnung) die Interessen einer in Ackerbau und Viehzucht . . . lebenden Gemeinde."

⁷ Cp. the investigations of E. Kornemann, "Polis und Urbs," in "Klio Beiträge zur alten Geschichte," 1905, p. 72 ff.

quantities of running water, and the consequent erosion, produced a large number of tongue-shaped or circular elevations, admirably suited to such settlements.⁸ These clusters of houses surrounded by a ring-wall were merely habitations. The people tilled the fields in the valleys below. It is impossible for us to distinguish clearly between these hill-top towns in their early history. They were probably very similar in population and consequently in customs. Judging however by the presence or absence in historic times of old cult centers it would seem that there was no settlement upon the Aventine,⁹ possibly because it was too close to the river. Nor does there seem to be any particular justification for supposing that the Palatine was in any sense the leader in this group of hill towns, by virtue either of its superior age or of its greater influence. The Palatine is singularly free from old cult associations.¹⁰ Such associations as seem old are connected with the later legends, for example that of Romulus and Remus, which did not arise until the fourth century, and even in these cases the Capitoline offers a distinct rivalry to the Palatine.¹¹ It is easy to understand how at a later day the Palatine might have been elevated into this position of superiority.¹²

⁸ Cp. the presentation of Richter: "Topographie der Stadt Rom," p. 25, 26.

⁹ At least in later times it is known as pagus Aventinensis, CIL., XIV., 2105 (inscription from Lanuvium); and the fact that it was later opened to the plebeians for settlement would indicate the absence of any older settlement. The town of Aventum is an unfortunate suggestion of Jordan ("Topographie," I, 1, 182) and never had existence. Cp. Huelsen in Pauly-Wissowa's "Encyclopædie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft," s. v. Aventinus, Sp. 2283, 23 ff.

¹⁰ Cacus and the very doubtful Caca, in whom Wissowa ("R. und K.," p. 24, note 1) is inclined to see a pair of ancient gods, belong really on the Aventine rather than on the Palatine. Huelsen's statement (Jordan-Huelsen, I. 3, p. 45), "von den Kulten auf dem Palatin cheinen einige in sehr alte Zeit hinauf zu gehen, wie der der Febris, der Fortuna, der Dea Viriplaca, der Luna Noctiluca," must be taken merely relatively, as none of the deities mentioned (with the exception of the uncertain Dea Viriplaca) precede the later kingdom.

¹¹ Cp. the rival casa Romuli on the Capitoline; and the Salii Palatini versus the Salii Collini.

¹² Owing to its popularity as a residence during the closing years of the Republic, and the preference of Augustus and his successors.

This little group of towns is not as yet however the city of Rome: it is possible that in the course of time it might have become the city of Rome, either by the superior power of one oppidum which would shortly have added the others to its territory, in somewhat the way in which the traditional account considers that Rome was actually founded,—the Varronian scheme, which proceeds from the presupposition of the primacy of the Palatine,—or by some sort of reciprocity, resulting in union, of which we see the first traces in the annual joint sacrifices of the Septimontium.¹³ But either one of these ways would have required a very long period of time, and in either case the intellectual development of the people would have been continuous so that the traces of barbarism even in the conservative field of religion would have been much fewer in number. Every indication points to a rapid change and one which affected the towns equally. Such a change could come only from outside, and from a people superior to Rome in culture. When we ask what this people was, the answer comes more clearly every year,—the Etruscans.

It seems fairly certain that the Etruscans as we know them in the history of Italy were a composite people made up of a native Italic stock combined with an invading stock, whose original home was in Asia Minor.¹⁴ Further it seems probable that the invading stock came by sea across the Mediterranean and landed on the western coast of Italy, and that their advent did not precede the beginning of the eighth century.¹⁵ Allowing them about two centuries

¹³ On the Septimontium, compare Varro, L. L. 6, 24: *dies Septimontium nominatus ab his septem montibus, in quis sita urbs est, feriæ non populi sed montanorum modo, ut paganalia qui sunt alicuius pagi*; and the interesting treatment by Wissowa in the *Satura Viadrina-Gesammelte Abhandlungen*, p. 230 ff. Cp. also Platner: "Classical Philology," I., 1906, p. 69.

¹⁴ The hypothesis of the East, more especially of Asia Minor, as the original home of the Etruscans is at present pretty generally adopted. Their acquaintance with the Babylonian haruspicina and with Greek mythology, the general plan of their houses and the shape of their helmets all indicate an eastern origin. For details see the admirable résumé of the present condition of the Etruscan problem by Körte in Pauly-Wissowa s. v. *Etrusker*.

¹⁵ Whether the Etruscans came by land or by sea is still a subject of discussion, though the hypothesis of the sea route seems to be gaining strength at the expense of the other. There seem to be traces of their movement on

to accomplish their amalgamation and conquer the region afterwards known as Etruria, they would come into contact with the Roman stock in the plain of Latium about the beginning of the sixth century.¹⁶

The Etruscans, therefore, a sea-faring and so a city-loving folk, conquered these hill towns and enclosed them all together with the intervening valleys with one wall. But before building this wall, they drew the plough about the space to be enclosed and thus created the pomerium *ritu Etrusco*.¹⁷ We do not know very much about their wall but we do know about the pomerium, and as the wall was surely inside of it,¹⁸ we have a general idea of its position.

the islands of the eastern Mediterranean, especially on Lemnos, where an inscription practically Etruscan in character has been found. It is uncertain exactly what we are to call these people before the "Etruscan" people were brought into being by the amalgamation of this immigrant stock with the Italic stock. It has been suggested with a reasonable degree of probability that they were the Pelasgians. The date at which they entered Italy is a matter of some considerable uncertainty. The date as given above (circa 800) depends upon the validity of the supposition that in the long series of tombs which the cemeteries (especially near Bologna) show, the earlier tombs are not of the Etruscans but only the later ones, the *tombe-a-corridoio*, and the *tombe-a-camera*. However several scholars, who are in hearty accord with the eastern origin, and the journey by sea, are not content with so late a date as the eighth century, on the ground that it does not allow sufficient time for the development of the Etruscans in the peninsula of Italy. According to them the coming of the Etruscans should be placed two or three centuries earlier.

¹⁶ This date corresponds with the tradition of the later kingdom. Tarquinius Priscus reigned thirty-eight years, Servius Tullius forty-four years, Tarquinius Superbus twenty-five years, a total of one hundred and seven years, which added to B. C. 509, the supposed year of the founding of the Republic, gives B. C. 616, as the beginning of the so-called Later Kingdom. Such an agreement may be of absolutely no value, on the other hand it may have a certain significance if the tradition represents the faint reflection of the period of time when the new influence came.

¹⁷ Not only the Pomerium, but the whole idea of delimitation seems to have come to Rome from Etruria. Much of the terminology of Roman surveying bears the imprint of Etruria. Roman tradition recognized the Etruscan origin of the Pomerium: cp. Varro, L. L. V., 143: *oppida condebant in Latio Etrusco ritu multi, id est iunctis bobus, tauro et vacca, interiore aratro circumagebant sulcum.*

¹⁸ On the whole question of the pomerium and its relation to the city wall, compare *American Journal of Archaeology*, 1908, p. 177.

Thus was created what the topographers call "the city of the four regions."¹⁹ It would be preferable to use the old Roman term *urbs et capitolium*, for this city, the *urbs* did indeed contain four regions, but apart from the city though inclosed in the same wall was the citadel, the *capitolium*.²⁰ Such an arrangement is in itself an added proof that the Palatine was not the ruling spirit. The Etruscans coming from without were free from prejudice and chose the Capitoline as their citadel simply because it offered superior advantages from the fortificatory standpoint.

On the Capitoline arose the Etruscan temple of Jupiter, Juno and Minerva. It is strange that the Etruscan character of this cult has not been more readily recognized. Minerva herself is more than half an Etruscan deity, hitherto unknown to Rome,²¹ and the triad, Jupiter-Juno-Minerva, is a favorite among the Etruscans. The temple was built in the Etruscan style by Etruscan workmen and the ornamentation and the very images of the gods came from Etruria.²²

With the coming of the Etruscans begins a tradition which has in part an historical value. This tradition presents us with the figure of Servius Tullius, unquestionably a real person, probably the

¹⁹ "Die Vierregionenstadt" of the Germans. I do not know of any instances of the term in antiquity. The ancient term seems to have been *urbs et capitolium*.

²⁰ The capitolium had of course a protecting wall of its own. This is clear from the fact that it was capable of being held against the Gauls, even after the Gauls had captured the city proper. The other hill-top oppida which were included in the *urbs* certainly had walls of their own, but these walls probably ceased to be kept up after the large surrounding wall was built. In the case of the Capitolium however the original wall was preserved and probably strengthened.

²¹ Minerva has no festival in the old calendar, the so-called calendar of Numa. The Quinquatrus which occurs in that calendar and which is ordinarily associated with Minerva had originally no connection with her, but belonged entirely to Mars. Minerva's cult seems to have originated at Falerii and to have spread from there into Etruria and also into Rome. On Minerva, cp. Wissowa in Roscher's *Lexikon*, s. v. Minerva, and "Religion und Kultus," p. 203; and Carter, "Religion of Numa," p. 44 ff.

²² The image of Jupiter came from Etruria; compare Pliny (N. H., XXXV., 157) and Ovid (F., I., 201 ff.); also the quadriga on the roof (Pliny, *l. c.*). The workmen employed on the temple gave the name to the *Vicus Tuscus*, where they lived.

first historical character in the annals of Rome. But though the character of Servius is a real one, legend has added many of the "events" attributed to him. One of these events concerns our own theme—it is the building of the wall of Rome. The tourist knows this wall as the inner of the two walls, of which traces still remain in Rome, that wall of which there are remnants beside the railway station and on the Via Nazionale.²³ Up to the present the statement that Servius built a wall has been accepted as an historical fact, and though it was recognized that the so-called Servian wall as we know it dates from the end of the fourth century before Christ, scholars have almost always assumed that there was another wall on the same spot and that this previous wall dated from the Servian age.²⁴ But, as I hope to be able to show in a moment, this is an altogether gratuitous assumption, and serves simply to hinder the understanding of history. In the first place there is absolutely no proof that Servius Tullius built a wall, other than the name "Servian wall" which attaches to a structure obviously of the fourth century. The tradition would in any case be worthless, but we have not even a consistent tradition. A study of the growth of the city as attributed to the various kings brings no profit, but exhibits merely a mass of contradictions and inconsistencies.²⁵ So far as the name

²³ Sections of this wall are constantly being discovered. At the date of writing (April, 1909) a very fine piece has been unearthed near the Spithoever property.

²⁴ The only exception to this statement known to me is Eduard Meyer (Hermes, XXX., 1895, p. 13): "dass die Servianische Mauer nicht älter ist als das vierte Jahrhundert, ist seit O. Richter's Nachweis unumstösslich. Sie umschliesst die Grossstadt der Samniterkriege." That this statement has not been more appreciated is doubtless owing to the fact that it is capable of being understood to apply merely to the date of the actually existing Servian wall, leaving always the possibility that it implies another wall on the same site preceding the "Servian" wall.

²⁵ In Dionysius of Halicarnassus (4, 13) and in Strabo (p. 234M) Servius Tullius is said to have added the Esquiline and the Viminal; but Livy (1, 44, cp. the author of *de vir. ill.* 7) says that he added the Quirinal and the Viminal and increased the Esquiline; whereas the Quirinal is elsewhere (Dionys. 2, 50, Strabo, p. 234M) supposed to have been included in the city of Romulus and Titus Tatius. On the other hand the so-called Servian wall included the Aventine, hence Servius is supposed to have added this hill to the city, whereas a very strong ancient tradition attributed the

itself is concerned, in the minds of the contemporaries and successors of Cato a wall at that time nearly two hundred years old would be easily associated with the kingdom and might readily be named after the most famous of the kings, Servius Tullius. There are in other words no traces of a real Servian wall either preserved in monumental form for the topographer or found in the historical records. The occasional references found in Livy to the gates of what we know as the "Servian Wall," in connection with events which happened at or before the Gallic catastrophe, are most rightly explained as anachronisms, and they offer no difficulty to one who is accustomed to the vagaries of the Roman historians.²⁶

On the contrary, it is on the face of it extremely unlikely that an enlargement of the city limits would have been necessary so soon after the building of the large encircling wall which we attribute to the Etruscans. Yet, as a matter of fact, the so-called "Servian Wall" includes a much larger space than the wall of the "Four-Region City."²⁷ It includes on the northeast the high tableland where the Quirinal and the Viminal unite, but still more important it includes the Aventine. It is the inclusion of the Aventine which creates the chief difficulties in understanding the history of Rome until after the Gallic catastrophe. Let us try the experiment of considering the Aventine as a suburb and of reading our history under such a condition.²⁸ The city which the Etruscans founded and in which Servius Tullius lived, and according to our present assumption the only city of Rome until after the Gallic addition to Ancus Martius (Cicero de rep. 2, 18; Dionys. Hal. 3, 43; Strabo, p. 234M; Liv. 1, 33; de vir. ill. 5). The difference of opinion regarding the Caelian is still more marked. On the whole question compare Jordan, "Topographie," II., p. 206, 207.

²⁶ *E. g.*, Livy (5, 41) speaks of the Gauls as entering by the Porta Collina, referring doubtless to the gate in the "Servian" wall, as it existed in his day.

²⁷ At this point the reader may be inclined to challenge these statements and to ask what we know of the course of the wall of the Four Region City. Of the wall itself we know nothing, but we do know that it lay inside the pomerium, and we know approximately the course of the pomerium, and to what extent it in its turn lay inside the Servian wall.

²⁸ It may require a certain amount of practice to conduct this experiment successfully, just as it takes practice to eliminate the arch of Severus in reconstructing the Forum of the Republic and early empire.

catastrophe, was that particular form of the city which the topographers call "the city of four regions" and which was more familiarly known in history as *urbs et capitolium*.

In the first place we note the permanency of the phrase *urbs et capitolium*²⁹ and we ask whether it is likely that the phrase would have obtained such immortality if the form of the city to which it was applicable had so soon given way to the other form, the so-called Servian city. The permanence of the name seems to argue for the long existence of that particular city from which the name was derived. In the second place the annals of religion offer us in this early period at least this knowledge, namely, the establishment of temples to various deities more or less strangers to Rome, in the region outside of the pomerium.³⁰ One of the most important of these deities was Diana. She came into the religious life of the state merely because of her connection with the Latin league, and her temple was not a temple of Rome alone but of the whole league.³¹ This temple was situated on the Aventine,³² and while of course it was outside the pomerium it has always been difficult to understand why Rome made bold to put a league temple inside her city wall, when all the expanse of the Campus Martius was at her disposal. But if as we are now supposing the Aventine also was a suburb, the difficulty disappears. Conversely when the temple of Apollo³³ was built, while it must of necessity have been outside the pomerium, it is difficult to see why it should have been placed in the exposed Campius Martius, when there was the possibility of placing it on the Aventine itself outside the pomerium but sup-

²⁹ *Urbs et capitolium* occurs; Cæsar de bell. civ. 1, 6, 7; Liv. 3, 18, 6; cp. Liv. 38, 51, 13; Flor. Epit. 2, 6, 45; Jord. Rom. 202.

³⁰ A useful list of these temples and their dates is given in Wissowa's "Religion und Kultus," p. 516 ff. It is based largely on E. Aust, de ædibus sacris populi Romani unde a primis liberæ reipublicæ temporibus usque ad Augusti imperatoris ætatem Romæ conditis. Marburg, 1889.

³¹ Cp. Carter, "Religion of Numa," p. 53 ff.; Wissowa, "Religion und Kultus," p. 198 ff. and in P. W. sub verbo. Diana came into the worship of the league as the goddess of Aricia.

³² For the question of the exact location of this temple, cp. Jordan-Huelsen, "Topographie," I. 3, p. 158 ff. It is found on fragment 3 of the Forma Urbis Romæ.

³³ On the temple of Apollo, cp. Jordan-Huelsen, "Topographie," p. 535 ff.

posedly protected by the city wall. For the worship of Apollo was purely an affair of the Roman state, and hence could well be inside the wall provided it was outside the pomerium. But again under our present supposition we realize that the Aventine also was a suburb and hence, so far as protection was concerned, it would be a matter of indifference whether the temple was on the Aventine or in the Campus Martius.

Turning from the field of religion to that of constitutional development, it has always been difficult to understand why there should have been only four city tribes, named after the four regions, in case the city so soon extended its borders and took in the Aventine. But if the Aventine was added two centuries later it will readily be seen that the force of habit two centuries old caused the number of city tribes to be limited to four even when the city had exceeded the local limits of the four old regions.

But when we turn to the question of the increase in Rome's population and the disposal of it we have our best argument for treating the Aventine as a suburb. The population was increasing rapidly—we see signs of it in the growing number of foreigners both tradespeople and handicraftsmen. By degrees there arose a problem very similar to that of modern Rome, a dearth of houses for the working classes. It was then (456) that a law was passed providing for the plebeians on the Aventine.³⁴ Had the Aventine been an internal part of the city it is difficult to see why it would not have been occupied long before. But as an extreme measure the expedient of giving the plebeians land in the suburbs might easily have been adopted.

Thus it was that the city began to outgrow its walls, both in the Aventine region and in the Campus Martius. The proof of this outgrowing is given us in the story of the Gallic catastrophe in B. C. 390. For it is only thus that we can understand why the city was no longer capable of defending itself, and why the Gauls captured it without difficulty, the capitolium alone offering a successful resistance. The tradition of the Gallic catastrophe seems to do

³⁴ On this law, the *lex Icilia*, cp. Dionys. 10, 31, and Liv. 3, 31, 1.

violence to the truth in at least two respects; first in underestimating the completeness of the Gallic victory; and second with that sublime indifference to contradiction which is so apt to characterize tradition, by overestimating the amount of physical damage which the Gauls did to the city. At a later time it was customary to attribute all the crookedness and lack of plan which characterized the arrangement of the city streets and buildings to the haste with which Rome was rebuilt after it had been destroyed by the Gauls.³⁵ But this presupposes that the Gauls wrought an amount of destruction which would partake of an industry quite at variance to what we know of their natural indolence. But quite aside from the question of destruction the Gallic catastrophe had brought one lesson home to the Romans, namely, that their city needed a defence. It is not surprising that in the years following the retreat of the Gauls a new wall was built on a new line so as to include the now populated Aventine. To include the suburb at the south of the Campus Martius was impossible because of engineering difficulties.

It is no wonder therefore that a passage in the sixth book of Livy (chapter 32) dealing with the year B. C. 378 speaks of the building of a wall,³⁶ and that another passage (Book VII., Chapter 20, under the year B. C. 353) speaks of repairs to walls and towers.³⁷ Rome was beginning her conquest of Italy, and it was necessary that she should herself be protected from hostile forces. This is accordingly the epoch from which dates the so-called Servian Wall.

³⁵ Cp. the striking passage in Livy (5, 55): *antiquata deinde lege promise urbs ædificari cœpta. Tegula publice præbita est, saxi materiæque cædendæ, unde quisque vellet, ius factum prædibus acceptis eo anno ædificia perfecturos. Festinatio curam exemit vicos dirigendi, dum omisso sui alienique discrimine in vacuo ædificant. Ea est causa, ut veteres cloacæ, primo per publicum ductæ, nunc privata passim subeant tecta, formaque urbis sit occupatæ magis quam divisæ similis.* Cp. also the passage in Tacitus (*Annal.*, 15, 38) where he compares the rebuilding of Rome after the Gallic catastrophe with the rebuilding after Nero's fire.

³⁶ *Et tantum abesse spes veteris levandi fœneris, ut tributo novum fœnus contraheretur in murum a censoribus locatum saxo quadrato faciundum.*

³⁷ *Legionibusque Roman reductis reliquum anni muris turribusque reficiendis consumptum, et ædis Apollinis dedicata est.*

With the capture of the city by the Gauls, Rome enters upon her period of inviolability for almost exactly eight hundred years, and the thought suggests itself irresistibly that the reputation for inviolability thus gained may have been a large factor in preserving her inviolate. Even in these early days the city began to be "that so holy spot, the very Rome."

ROME, April 2, 1909.